

THE EARLIEST BRITISH COLUMBIA IMPRINT

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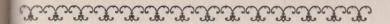
BY
Douglas C. McMurtrie



CHICAGO
PRIVATELY PRINTED
MCMXXXI

CERTIFICATION OF

Two bundred and fifty copies only reprinted from Printing Review of Canada for December, 1930.



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In all accounts of British Columbia printing which I have seen, the distinction of being the first printed work other than a newspaper has been quite unanimously conferred on Judge David Cameron's "Rules of Practice" in the Supreme Court of Civil Justice of the Colony of Vancouver's Island. In a brief sketch of the first printing in British Columbia which was published in 1929, I could record no pamphlet which antedated the Cameron "Rules." And M. Aegidius Fauteux, in his excellent *Introduction of Printing into Canada*, also gives precedence to the "Rules."

But it seems that there is a rival claimant to the honor of priority among British Columbia *incunabula* in the form of a pamphlet of which I have seen no mention anywhere except in an auction catalogue in which it was listed. It contains eight pages, in printed yellow paper wrappers, and its

Douglas, Governor of Vancouver's Island, and its Dependencies; Vice Admiral of the Same, etc., etc., etc., etc., etc. The title is surmounted by the royal arms, and the imprint is that of the Vancouver Island Gazette Office. A reproduction of the title as printed is shown herewith.

The date of this proclamation is August 25, 1858. The Vancouver Island Gazette was established July 28 of that year and, according to reliable authorities, published only about eight semi-weekly issues. This proclamation, therefore, must have been among the very last products of that press. It is the only pamphlet that I know of to bear the imprint of the Vancouver Island Gazette.

The date of the publication of the proclamation is quite definitely fixed in the last week of August, 1858. The date of the Cameron "Rules" cannot be fixed with any such exactness; it had not appeared when Alfred Waddington wrote the foreword to his Fraser Mines Vindicated. This foreword, dated November 15, 1858, says that the work was "the first book published on Vancouver Island," adding, however, in a footnote the statement: "When the above was written Judge Cameron's Book of Practice had not appeared." The "Rules of Practice" evidently came out while the







PROCLAMATION

BY HIS EXCELLENCY,

JAMES DOUGLAS,

Governor of Vancouver's Island,

AND ITS DEPENDENCIES:

VICE ADMIRAL OF THE SAME,

ETC., ETC., ETC.

VICTORIA

PRINTED AT THE VANCOUVER ISLAND CAZETTE OFFICE.

1858.





Waddington book was in the printer's hands. As near as we can say, this was in October or November, 1858. At any rate, it was considerably later than the proclamation of August 25th.

The Vancouver Island Gazette, which printed the proclamation, was an undertaking of Frederick Marriott, an adventurous printer from San Francisco, who was later the editor and publisher for many years of the San Francisco News Letter. As has been said, his first publishing venture at Victoria lasted but four or five weeks. On September 11, 1858, there began to appear a French paper at Victoria, Le Courrier de la Nouvelle Caledonie, of which the same Frederick Marriott is said to have been the printer. It was owned by Paul de Garro, an exiled French count. The editor's name in the masthead of the first issue was W. Thornton. It was probably from the press of this newspaper that Waddington's famous little book proceeded, as it bears the imprint of P. de Garro. This does not necessarily mean, of course, that the retired nobleman set the type or pulled the press, or indeed knew anything whatever about the printing craft.

Between the printing of the proclamation of August 25, 1858, and the printing of Cameron's "Rules" later in the same year, there appeared at

Victoria, probably from the office of the Victoria Gazette, two other proclamations by Governor Douglas, dated respectively September 6th and September 15th, both of them broadsides. The first provided heavy penalties for supplying the Indians of Fraser River with intoxicating liquor. The second warned the public against fraudulent sales of public lands. It thus seems that, except for newspapers, the official proclamations of the Governor were the earliest known landmarks of printing in Victoria.